

A Fool's Paradise

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A Fool's Paradise

by [SilverWing15](#)

Summary

(is a Wise Man's Hell)

Sequel to One Man's Trash (read that one first)

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“It’ll be alright,” Quackity says, “things are different now. I’ll keep you safe this time, I won’t let them hurt you. You can trust me, right?”

Tommy looks up at him. His face is soft with sympathy, but there is no warmth in it. He looks back down.

They’ll come for him. They will. They have to. They’ll figure out he’s missing and they’ll come.

They always said they would hurt whoever hurt him. He’s under their protection. They’ll come for him.

But how long will it take?

Quackity’s hand runs through his hair. “I’ve got you,” he murmurs.

‘That,’ Tommy thinks, ‘is the problem.’

Notes

Sequel Time!! I'm hype for you guys to see this one, there is a Lot of angst going on here fam. Prepare yourselves.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Welcome Home

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Its been two months. Three since he met Wilbur. He was on the streets for three years and going from that to being mother henned by three supervillains is.

A lot.

Its a lot.

Tommy isn't afraid of them.

But they are still a lot.

There is nowhere he can go that he won't end up with someone with him, someone watching out for him. For a guy who lived three fucking years trying to avoid being seen its *stressful*.

So Tommy goes for walks sometimes. Not often, but sometimes he can't stand the weight of eyes watching him. Techno's shadows try to follow him, but he's gotten better at spotting them and they're actually pretty good about leaving him alone if he asks them to.

He really wishes that this time they'd been a bit worse about it.

Because then one of them would have told Techno about the guy who oh-so-casually threw his arm around Tommy's shoulders, talking loudly about missing him.

Pressing himself so close that no one can see the knife in his hand, but Tommy can feel it against his side.

"We've been looking for you," the man murmurs. His hand wraps around Tommy's mouth and everything goes black.

He knows, the minute he's chucked into the trunk. But he hopes, god does he hope. He manages to keep the feeble light of it alive as he's grabbed up by the arms and frog-marched up a set of concrete steps.

He's blindfolded, but he can hear the squeak of hinges as a rusty door is opened. It could be anyone. It might not be--

The stench of alcohol hits him like a fist to the gut, and hope flickers and dies out, and Tommy *knows*.

Three years. He made it three years on his own. three months of knowing Wilbur. Two months of living with him. All of it undone in one afternoon. One idiotic choice to go for a

walk while the others were out and he was alone.

Now Schlatt has found him again.

Tommy tries to dig his heels in, but the men guiding him don't even pause. They simply shove him forward. He falls to his knees and he barely gets his bound hands up in time to catch himself.

"Come on now," a familiar voice says, Quackity, not Schlatt, not yet, but he's going to come. He's going to be here, with his smug voice and his rotten breath and his swaying gait. He's going to be here with his fury. There is nothing Schlatt hates more than disloyalty.

"No need to be rough with the kid," Quackity says. "Go on now, thank you for the delivery, now off with you."

"But--"

"Bye!"

There is a grunt, then shuffling footsteps, and a door closes. One set of footsteps returns. "Sorry about them," Quackity says, "not really delicate instruments, huh?"

Tommy flinches away from the hand that lands on his shoulder with a sharp inhale.

"Easy," Quackity soothes, "Just me. You remember me right kid? You know I don't hurt you."

Tommy nods once, hesitantly. Quackity never *needed* to hurt him. There were other people for that. He was nicer than most of Schlatt's people though.

Quackity's hand touches his shoulder again, gentle, steady, but possessive all the same. "Good," he says, almost absentmindedly. "I'm glad you know how to talk things out at least. This group wasn't exactly picked for their brains, huh?"

Tommy shakes his head and Quackity laughs.

"You were always clever though, clever enough to get out. Not even I could manage that. Kind of sucks for you that you're not out there being free anymore, but how great could it have been huh? Starving out on the streets. At least here you get meals and a warm place to sleep."

He *had* meals. Three square meals a day, as much as he wanted, and he had a warm place to sleep. He had his own bed, and blankets that he picked out, and he could peek in on Wilbur any time he wanted and crawl in bed with him when sleeping alone woke up too many memories.

He had it all. But he went for a walk and somehow now its all gone.

How long will it take for the others to realize he's not just spending the day out? Why had he told the fucking shadows to leave him alone?

Quackity uncuffs his hands, “damn, they got those tight, sorry.” He grabs Tommy’s hand, rubbing blood back into his wrist. Tommy hesitantly pulls his hand away, thankfully, Quackity lets him.

Tommy reaches up for the blindfold, but Quackity bats his hands away. “Let me get it,” he says, “they did a weird knot, you won’t be able to do it blind.”

He hovers behind Tommy, so close Tommy can feel the heat of his body on the back of his neck. His hands are gentle, tugging out the hair that got tied into the cloth without even pulling it too hard. Then the blindfold itself falls away.

He’s in a blank room. There are no windows. There is only one door. It locks from the outside. There’s a pile of blankets in the corner, and even a pillow. He shudders.

Its not the same room. But its familiar.

Its all so terribly familiar.

He covers his mouth with a hand and collapses in on himself.

He tried, he ran, he fought, he did *everything*. But he’s still here. He’s still back here.

His breath is coming too fast, too hard, his eyes are stinging and blurry with tears.

“Aw kid,” Quackity murmurs, “I know.”

He wraps an arm around Tommy’s shoulder. He smells like cigarette smoke and alcohol. He’s bony and his clothes are rough, he’s short, even on his knees beside Tommy. He’s nothing like Wilbur, nothing like Techno, or Phil.

“It’ll be alright,” Quackity says, “things are different now. I’ll keep you safe this time, I won’t let them hurt you. You can trust me, right?”

Tommy looks up at him. His face is soft with sympathy, but there is no warmth in it.

He looks back down.

They’ll come for him. They will. They have to. They’ll figure out he’s missing and they’ll come.

They always said they would hurt whoever hurt him. He’s under their protection. They’ll come for him.

But how long will it take?

Quackity’s hand runs through his hair. “I’ve got you,” he murmurs.

‘*That*,’ Tommy thinks, ‘*is the problem*.’

When his breathing has evened back out, Quackity pats him softly on the back and pulls away. "Alright kid," he says, "you know you're gonna have to see him sometime."

"Please," Tommy croaks, trying to back away. Quackity catches him by the wrist. His grip is gentle, but immovable.

"I'm sorry," Quackity says, "but I'll be with you right? The whole time. He's not quite as...capable as he used to be, kid. He can barely get up nowadays."

"What?"

Quackity hums, "all that shit he does has been catching up with him," he says, "he's had some health issues, you remember how you were always healing him? Yeah, he hasn't had that. He's dying."

"He's--" Tommy cuts himself off. It seems impossible for Schlatt to be dying. He was powerful, unstoppable, stubborn. At the very least he seemed the type to simply refuse to get sick, refuse to die.

"He won't hurt you," Quackity says, "I'll keep you safe. You can trust me."

Tommy lets himself be tugged to his feet. He's taller than Quackity if he stands up straight, but his spine refuses to unbend. He hunches in on himself, arms wrapped around his stomach as they walk through the building.

Its different from where they were three years ago, when Tommy escaped. Its broken down, it might honestly be condemned for all Tommy knows. Its some sort of warehouse, converted into an office, maybe, and then abandoned.

Quackity leads him past rusted metal and cracked drywall. The lights overhead are weak and flickering, casting long shadows, but none of them sprout familiar eyes. None of them whisper unintelligible reassurances.

Quackity knocks on a door. "Sir?" he calls, but he doesn't wait for a response before he opens it. "The healer is here, sir," he says.

Schlatt is in some sort of fancy armchair type thing. Or maybe one of those hospital beds that can sit up. Tommy's only seen them on TV. There are tubes and wires connected to him.

A heart monitor traces a green line over the screen but it must be muted or something, its not beeping like they do on TV. There's a tube thing running under his nose, and a canister attached to it. Oxygen.

He is dying.

Holy shit he's dying.

Schlatt cracks open an eye and turns his head, he can barely seem to manage it with the weight of his horns. "Who?" his voice is rusty and slurred.

“The healer kid sir.”

Schlatt blinks slowly. Once. Twice. Three times. “Oh. Where’s he been?”

Tommy’s breath hitches. He braces. This is it. Quackity will tell him that they found him, that he’s not on the run anymore. Quackity will tell him that Tommy has been disloyal, and there is nothing Schlatt hates more than disloyalty.

“He’s been in his room sir, remember?”

Tommy nearly cracks his neck whipping around to look at Quackity. He opens his mouth, but Quackity’s hand on his shoulder squeezes once in warning. He shuts up.

The oxygen hisses, the IV drips, the green line traces the beat of Schlatt’s heart. Up and down, and up and down. “Oh,” Schlatt says, “what was he fuckin’ doin’ in there. Don’t keep the lil’ shit around to sit there an’ look pretty. Get his ass over here.”

Quackity pushes Tommy forward. Tommy takes one hesitant step, another. Closer and closer to the monster that haunted his dreams for so long. The shadow on the wall, the man that taught him fear, the man who taught him how *useful* a healer was.

He looks frail. He’s as skinny as Tommy was when he met Wilbur in that dumpster. His hand trembles where its locked around the neck of a bottle Tommy doesn’t think he even has the strength to lift to his lips.

This is the man that haunted him. This is the monster of his childhood. He’s...disappointing.

Tommy could kill him. It would be as easy as taking that bottle out of his hand and smashing it over his head.

Tommy could kill him by doing nothing.

He’s killing himself.

“Well?” Schlatt asks, “gonna stand there all day you lil shit?”

“No sir,” Tommy says in a whisper.

Schlatt snorts, “glad some time in your room taught you manners. Brat.”

Tommy reaches out and lays one trembling hand on Schlatt’s chest. He can feel his ribs, even through the blanket tucked around him, even through the suit that he’s still wearing.

He looks like he’s already dressed for his funeral.

He takes a deep breath, and lets the power flow through him.

Schlatt’s eyelids flutter, he sighs, his chest deflates, tension leaves his muscles. “Y’ur a good kid,” he slurs, “Q...Q give him..’xtra shit.”

“Yes sir,” Quackity says.

The trance wraps around Tommy, soft and warm and familiar. Power flows from him and into Schlatt.

He knows how to limit his power, how to throttle it back so he doesn't give too much all at once. It would take a lot more than one session to heal Schlatt. With a bitter, vengeful taste in his mouth, he keeps back more power than he needs to.

He still sways on his feet, falling back into Quackity's arms with a thin sound. His body is far away, his thoughts vague and unhelpful.

He misses Wilbur, and Techno, and Phil. He wants *them*, not Quackity. He wants to be in the apartment, he doesn't want to be *here*. He tries to shove Quackity away, but he's too weak.

“Calm down kid,” Quackity murmurs into his ear, “chill out. Don't fight me, you know you'll lose.”

Tommy whines.

Quackity wraps his arm over his shoulders, “come on, back to your room.”

It's hard to speak in the trance, but Tommy fights the warmth back, fights the soft molasses-slow weight of his thoughts. “No,” he manages to mumble.

“That's the rules kid, sorry,” Quackity says. He doesn't really sound very sorry.

He drags Tommy back through the rusted halls, the cracked drywall, the shadows that don't watch him. The shadows that won't speak to Techno and tell him where Tommy is.

Tommy reaches out for them, just in case an almost-there nose might brush his hand. Quackity opens the door to his room.

It's cold, and bare, there is only the small cot, only a thin blanket.

“Here you go,” he says, “I'll bring you some food around when you wake up. We'll talk, how's that.”

“I wanna go home,” Tommy mutters.

Quackity only gives him a pitying look, “you are home, kid. As shitty as it is. Welcome back.”

The door locks behind him.

Chapter End Notes

Well, you guys wanted to see Schlatt right? here he is. Schlatt. And Quackity! who we'll be seeing more of. Yay.

Edit 8/2/21

STOP

Before you write a comment about how Character Did Bad Thing, I am aware. I wrote them doing A Bad on purpose. That is the point of Dumpster Verse. There is no moral paragon here. Nobody is entirely a good or bad guy. They are all going to do bad shit, they will all do good shit. I am tired of comments just talking about how the characters did Bad Thing, if that's all you've got to say, you're reading the wrong story. This is a universe about moral complexity.

I have asked people to refrain from leaving the angry "Character did bad >:((" comments before but I will do so here at the root of the problem as well. If gray morality upsets you and you don't like non-black and white narratives: go. read. something. else. this is not a story for you, you will not enjoy it and i will not enjoy your comments.

An Unfortunate Cycle

Chapter Summary

“I know I’ve got a bit more pull than you,” Quackity says, “but hey, that’s a good thing. We can work together. You’ve seen Schlatt, you know he’s on his way out. Even with your healing, he’s not going to make it. You know it, I know it.” His voice is low and quiet, almost mesmerizing. “This is our chance,” he says, “one prisoner to another, a couple of guys with useful skills, playing the hand we were dealt.”

Chapter Notes

hot damn y'all, we're almost to a thousand kudos and this is only the second chapter. Where do you all keep *coming* from? Every time I turn around there's more of you. I'm glad you're enjoying the ride though!

A couple people were wondering how Schlatt's gang found Tommy again after they couldn't for three years and the answer is it was just Shit Luck. Because sometimes life is shitty like that. Tommy was less careful when he went out, one dude spotted him and yoinked him then and there.

The poor fools have no idea that SBI is gonna be looking for Their Boy. Rip to them.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

He wakes up and he's still here. Still in this empty room, still under the thin blanket, on the stiff cot. His head is clear. He wishes he could cling to the softness of the trance.

He sits up, someone has taken away his shoes. He doesn't see them anywhere in the room. He rests his bare feet on the floor. Its freezing. He curls his toes, pulls his legs back up onto the bed so he can wrap his arms around them.

The shadows are still, there are no burning eyes, no comforting whispers.

He's alone.

They haven't found him.

Part of him wonders if they're looking. But no, no. They have to be. They said he was one of them. They said he was under their protection. They said he was *family*.

They'll come for him. He just has to have faith. Faith and patience.

He sits alone in his room, his cell, for hours.

Finally, footsteps approach. They stop in front of his door and he tenses. His breath catches in his throat as the lock clicks.

“Hey kid,” Quackity says, the hinges squeal as he pushes the door open. There’s a bag in his hand, some shitty gas station. “Picked you up some stuff. Schlatt said you could have extra so I got you a coke, I know you like those.”

Tommy hasn’t had a coke in three years.

He doesn’t think he likes them that much anymore.

He takes the bag anyway, because he knows that food is a reward, not a right. He has to take all he can get.

There’s a shitty gas station sandwich inside. Its cold, limp lettuce and waxy cheese, the meat pale and stringy. Nothing like the sandwiches Wilbur makes. There is no warmth, no care.

He unwraps it and downs it in three bites, washing it down with the coke. Phil was always trying to get him to eat slower, to actually taste his food.

It was easier when it was something Phil cooked. He always makes things delicious, and its never taken away. He can eat his fill of good food, warm food.

The sandwich sits heavily in his stomach.

“So,” Quackity says, “I wanted to talk to you.” He sits on the edge of the cot. “Damn this thing is shitty.” He bounces a couple times, or tries to. “I’ll try to get you something better, okay?”

Tommy shrugs and looks at his empty hands.

Quackity wraps an arm around his shoulders and leans in close, “you and me,” he says, “we’ve always been the same, you know? Neither of us wanted to be here, neither of us wanted this life.”

Tommy is pretty sure they’re *not* all that much alike outside of that. Quackity started out as a prisoner, like him, but Quackity is basically Schlatt’s second in command now. He can leave, he can order the goons around, they don’t use him as a punching bag.

“I know I’ve got a bit more pull than you,” Quackity says, “but hey, that’s a good thing. We can work together. You’ve seen Schlatt, you know he’s on his way out. Even with your healing, he’s not going to make it. You know it, I know it.” His voice is low and quiet, almost mesmerizing. “This is our chance,” he says, “one prisoner to another, a couple of guys with useful skills, playing the hand we were dealt.”

His teeth flash as he smiles, feral and dangerous, his eyes gleam in the dark. “When he dies, I’m going straight to the top, kid, and I’ll take you with me. I’m not Schlatt, I’m not gonna sit around drinking myself to death. I’m going to fucking *make something* of this operation. And

you could be in with me. You're a useful kid, kid. I'll treat you right, you'll live like a fucking king, hear me? Just stick with me, and we'll both be kings."

Its tempting, surprisingly tempting. Tommy's never been one for ambition, but he can see it. Staying by Quackity's side. Quackity has always been kind to him, Quackity--

Quackity's power is charm. People trust him, people listen to him. He's nowhere near as powerful as Wilbur, but he's powerful enough.

Tommy pulls away. "But Schlatt--"

"He's dying, kid." Quackity says.

He never says Tommy's name. Tommy wonders if he even knows it.

"I don't--"

"Come on," Quackity says, "we won't *do* anything. I'm not asking you to kill the guy with your own two hands. Just follow my lead. Can you do that?"

"I--yeah." Tommy looks at his hands. "I can do that."

For now. Until his family comes for him.

Quackity grins, "I knew I could count on you. Just you wait, things'll be looking up for the both of us."

And he leaves. And the door locks behind him.

The shadows are still empty and dead.

And Tommy is alone.

Schlatt somehow looks worse when Tommy is brought to him. His breath has a rasping, gurgling, wheeze to it that can't be covered by the hiss of the oxygen tank. His eyes are bloodshot and unfocused.

"Sir," Quackity says, "the healer is here again."

Schlatt wheezes, his eyes land on Tommy for a moment, then wander off somewhere to his left.

"Come on kid," Quackity says, "heal him."

Tommy shudders and takes a step closer. Schlatt looks at him again for a moment, but his head falls to the side. His horns, curled around his ears look...wrong. Dry and cracked, bare without all the jewelry that Schlatt used to have pierced through them. The empty holes look like termite burrows through rotted wood.

Tommy rests his hand on Schlatt's chest and lets the power flow through him.

Quackity takes him back to his cell and locks the door behind him.

The shadows are still and silent.

Tommy falls asleep.

He wakes up to a crash, a clatter, a scream. Out in the building beyond his cell. He jumps out of bed, half his instincts sure that its someone come to chase him out of whatever spot he's found to sleep, the other half sure that its someone come to make him their punching bag.

Its neither, apparently.

The sounds stay in the deeper parts of the building, away from Tommy's room. It sounds like a fight. His heart soars and he leaps off of the cot to press himself against the door. He opens his mouth to shout, to call for them but stops.

The shadows are still just shadows. There are no eyes, no voices. He doesn't hear Wilbur's Song, or Phil's laugh. It isn't them.

This is someone else.

They don't last long, with one more crash, the warehouse falls silent.

Tommy stares at the door, but there is no motion, no sound. No sign or explanation of what just happened.

"What the fuck?" he whispers.

Nobody answers him.

Tommy sits back on the cot and lays down again. He's hungry, he doesn't know when Quackity will come with food.

He shuts his eyes.

He opens them to the squeal of the hinges. His door is opening. He sits up, expecting Quackity to come in with another shitty gas station sandwich.

A boy is shoved through instead. He looks like shit, Tommy notices as he catches himself on the floor. His hands are cuffed and bruised, his face is bruised too, his lip and nose are both bleeding. There's a cut above his eye that's stopped, but there's half dried blood going down his cheek.

"New roommate, brat," the goon grunts, and then the door slams shut.

What the fuck.

The kid picks himself up off the ground, watching Tommy warily. Tommy watches him back.

They're both silent for a long moment, waiting for someone to make the first move.

“...So,” the kid rasps, “you come here often?”

Tommy snorts, “what the fuck man?”

The kid shrugs, “gotta break the ice somehow. Who’re you?”

Tommy shrugs, “your roommate, I guess.”

The kid looks at his bare feet, then around the empty cell. Probably clocking Tommy as another prisoner. “Nice place.”

Belatedly, Tommy realizes that the kid is in some...body suit type thing. Its armored. Tommy’s eyes narrow. *Hero*.

“You’re a dumbass,” Tommy informs him.

The kid scowls at him, “hey genius, we’re *both* locked in here.”

“Yeah, but I was kidnapped, you brought this shit on yourself. Why the fuck are you here?”

“Because these are villains?” The kid asks, “and I’m a hero?”

“Dumbass.”

The kid tries to jump to his feet but he sinks back onto the ground with a groan, raising a hand to his head. Serves him right.

“Yeah, well, at least I fought the assholes. You just, what? Sat there helplessly?”

Tommy snarls wordlessly. The words hit far too close to home.

Helpless, he’s always helpless. He’s a fucking healer. He needs someone to defend him. But he’d been stubborn and prideful and far too confident in his own safety.

And now he’s here.

“Hey, I--I’m sorry,” the hero-kid says. “That was mean.”

“What is this, kindergarten?” Tommy sneers.

“I’m trying to extend the olive branch here!”

“Well keep it on *your* side of the room. I don’t need your hero bullshit getting on mine.”

“How come you get the side with the bed?”

“Because I was here first and you can’t stand, I don’t think you’re gonna fight me for it.”

The kid tries to get up again, but it goes just about as well as last time. “You’re a dick.”

“You’re a dumbass.”

They’re both quiet again for a long time.

“I’m Tubbo.”

“Why the fuck would you tell me that?”

Tubbo shrugs, “I figured if we’re gonna be roommates...”

“Whatever,” Tommy grumbles. “We’re cellmates, not fucking friends, dumbass.”

“You’re really grumpy.”

“You’re really annoying.”

They’re quiet again.

“My friend got away,” Tubbo says quietly, “he’ll tell our allies and they’ll come rescue me. We can get you out too.”

“I hope they’re better at fighting than you,” Tommy mutters, laying back down with his back to Tubbo. He’s still tired, he needs to get as much sleep as he can get.

The door opens again, Tommy jolts up. Tubbo is pressed to the far corner, every muscle tense. Quackity steps in, his smile all teeth. There’s a goon behind him. He’s not smiling.

“Hey kids,” Quackity says, “you guys getting along?”

Tommy stands, he knows what Quackity is here for. “Yeah, we’re best friends now. Are you done gloating?”

Quackity laughs, “sure, sure. You ready to go?”

Tommy swallows, “yeah.”

“Wait, where are you--” Tubbo stands up, takes a step closer, his hand reaching for Tommy’s arm. The goon growls and takes a much more menacing step of his own. Tubbo shrinks back, his face pale.

“Come on,” Quackity says, “wouldn’t want to miss your appointment.”

“Definitely not,” Tommy mutters and follows him out of the cell. The door slams shut in their wake.

Schlatt has somehow managed to get *even worse* since Tommy saw him last. He has a whole breathing mask on his face now instead of just the nose-thing. He doesn't even open his eyes as Quackity approaches.

"A bit pointless, I'm pretty sure you can guess," he says, "but we've got to keep up appearances, right?"

Tommy nods mutely. He shuffles a step closer to Schlatt. Its...weird. Wrong. Seeing him so weak, so vulnerable. Tommy was so *scared* of him just three years ago.

His whim controlled everything about Tommy's life, and now he's...a husk. A toothless dragon. The monster in the closet, revealed to be nothing more than a shadow when the lights come on.

Somehow its not reassuring.

Tommy lays his hand on Schlatt's chest. He can feel the too-shallow rise and fall of it. The thready beat of his heart.

He pushes his power through his hand.

Quackity lets him lean on him as they go back through the building. The trance still has a firm grip on him when the door squeals open and he's dumped onto the cot. "You two behave," Quackity says.

Tommy blinks after him, confused. The door shuts. The lock clicks.

But he isn't alone.

"Hey," Tubbo says, "hey are you okay?"

Tommy blinks at him. Right. The hero-kid. Dumbass.

He can't figure out how to make his mouth say that. Oh well.

"Fuck," Tubbo mutters, he sounds stressed, and scared. "Shit. Okay, uh, can I...I can't fucking do anything. I don't even have *water* or food. Can you...are you okay?" He repeats, he sounds helpless.

Tommy gets his arm to cooperate enough to reach out to him and Tubbo takes it between both of his hands. He squeezes tight. "You'll be alright," he says, he sounds like he's trying to convince himself more than Tommy.

Tommy hums and shuts his eyes.

"No, no, no, wait, you should stay awake. Please stay awake?"

Tommy is tired though. He falls asleep.

This time he wakes up to another crash. There is definitely a fight going on outside. Again.

Can't a man get some fucking *rest* around here?

He whines and shoves his face into the pillow. Its thin and smells like booze and cigarettes. Just like everything else.

“Oh thank fuck,” Tubbo breathes. He’s sitting on the cot beside Tommy. His *hand* is in Tommy’s *hair*.

Its kind of nice.

“Its them,” Tubbo says, “it has to be them. Oh thank fuck they found us. Alright, we’ll be okay. They’re here.”

They?

Hope is rekindled in his chest. Wilbur, Phil, Techno. It must be. Tommy reaches out for the shadows, but they don’t come to his hand. Don’t rub fur/scales/feathers against his fingers. Don’t nip with playful fangs.

The door to their cell squeals open.

“Tubbo,” a voice says, “thank god you’re okay.”

“Sam,” Tubbo says tearfully, “you have to help. They did something to him.”

Chapter End Notes

:D surprise! ✨Tubbo Time✨ but also that's the last we're gonna see of him. Rip to Tubbo. And the friend he mentioned was Ranboo, that's literally all the screentime Ranboo gets. Don't get too attached to Sam being here either, this is gonna be Tommy and Dream Team Time. yaaay.

Also Quackity was totally fuckign poisoning Schlatt. I dunno if that was obvious enough or not but the dude was Done with Schlatt's bullshit and he decided to put him on the fast track to six feet under.

I Don't Need A Hero, I'd Like A Villain, Actually

Chapter Summary

The Warden laughs softly, "you're a scrappy one, I'll give you that." He walks out of the cell and Tommy has no choice but to watch as they go through the building. It looks like shit.

Half the cubicles are now destroyed, there's a giant hole in the ceiling, there's fucking scorch marks on shit. There's also a whole group of cops and EMTs and heroes loitering at the entrance. Fuckers.

Tommy scowls and tries to get out of Warden's arms. "It's alright," Warden says, "they're friends."

"Fuck off," Tommy snarls. He punches Warden's chest weakly.

He hardly seems to notice, blithely carrying Tommy to the group. One of the heroes looks up as they approach. He's familiar.

He's that fucking idiot from the mall.

"Holy shit," he breathes as his eyes fall on Tommy.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

"We'll take care of him Tubbo, you worry about yourself."

"But--"

"Go get patched up, can you walk?"

"Yeah, but--"

"I'll stay with him, don't worry. I'll do my absolute best to make sure he's okay."

"Sam..."

"Sometimes part of being a hero is knowing when to pull back and let someone else handle the situation. I promise I'll do everything I can to help him, alright?"

A sigh. "Alright." Tubbo's hand falls out of his hair and the cot shifts as he stands.

Tommy whines, finally cracking open an eye. There's a man in the door of the cell, a hero. Tommy's pretty sure he's seen him on the news or something. He scowls.

"Fuc'off."

“Hi there, you can call me Warden, I’m a hero, I’m here to help,” the hero says, conspicuously not fucking off. “What’s your name?”

Tommy glares at him.

“You don’t have to tell me, if you don’t want to.” He crouches beside Tommy, “Tubbo said you were hurt buddy. I’m a hero, I want to help you, can I check you out?”

“No,” Tommy grumbles, he shuts his eyes again. “Leave me ‘lone.”

“I’m sorry,” the hero says, “I can’t do that.”

Tommy opens his eyes again and scowls at him.

“Did they hurt you?” he asks.

Tommy remains stubbornly silent.

“Take something from you? Blood? Power?”

Slowly, he reaches out pressing two fingers under Tommy’s chin, to his throat. Tommy grabs his wrist, trying to dig his nails in, trying to shove it away, but he’s too weak. Quackity hasn’t been letting him rest much between healings. Its made the Trance linger in his mind and body, he’s useless, helpless. Again.

“Easy, easy, I’m just checking your pulse, its okay.” Warden grabs his wrist, gently, but he doesn’t have to be harsh, he’s too strong for Tommy to fight. Tommy whines, soft and anxious.

“A bit thready,” Warden says, finally taking his hand away, “its very important that you tell me if you’re hurt anywhere kid, I don’t want to make it worse when I carry you out of here.”

“No.”

“No you’re not hurt?”

Tommy buries his face into the pillow and curls up tighter.

The Warden lays a hand on his shoulder. He tenses, waiting.

“I’m gonna pick you up,” he says, “and carry you out, okay? I’m not going to hurt you.”

“Go ‘way.”

Warden doesn’t listen. He scoops Tommy up, slowly and carefully, but he doesn’t let Tommy wiggle out of the hold. He ends up tucked to the guy’s chest, his arms and legs gently pinned, but pinned all the same.

“Bitch.”

The Warden laughs softly, “you’re a scrappy one, I’ll give you that.” He walks out of the cell and Tommy has no choice but to watch as they go through the building. It looks like shit.

Half the cubicles are now destroyed, there’s a giant hole in the ceiling, there’s fucking *scorch marks* on shit. There’s also a whole group of cops and EMTs and heroes loitering at the entrance. Fuckers.

Tommy scowls and tries to get out of Warden’s arms. “Its alright,” Warden says, “they’re friends.”

“Fuck off,” Tommy snarls. He punches Warden’s chest weakly.

He hardly seems to notice, blithely carrying Tommy to the group. One of the heroes looks up as they approach. He’s familiar.

He’s that fucking idiot from the mall.

“Holy shit,” he breathes as his eyes fall on Tommy.

“He was a prisoner,” Warden says, “I think they--”

“That’s him,” Mall Idiot says, “that’s the kid. The kid that Siren took. Holy shit how did you find him?”

“He was upstairs, with Tubbo,” Warden says, but there is shock in his voice. “I thought that kid was--”

“So did I,” Mall Idiot says, stepping closer. He reaches up and brushes hair out of Tommy’s eyes, “hey, hey kid, you remember me?”

Tommy scowls at him and smacks his hand away. He wishes all these assholes would fuck off and leave him alone. He wants Will, he wants Techno, he wants Phil. The trance is sunk deep into his bones and he’s tired and helpless and he just wants all of them to leave him alone.

“Don’t cry,” Mall Idiot says, “its okay, you’re safe now. We’ve got you.”

That seems to be going around lately.

“What’s going on?” a new voice asks. There’s another hero coming over.

“Its the kid,” Mall Idiot says, “the one we thought Siren killed. He’s here, Sam saved him.”

The new hero looks down at Tommy, its getting harder and harder to keep his eyes open. The newcomer is nothing more than a vague blob of green with a patch of white. “So it is,” he says quietly, thoughtfully.

“Can we take over his case?” Mall Idiot says, “since we were the ones who got him captured?”

The new guy looks at Tommy for a long moment, “sure,” he says finally, “we don’t have much else on our plates. If you’re alright with that Sam?”

“Of course,” Warden says, “I know how much this means to Sapnap.”

“Thank you,” Mall Idiot says, and then warm--almost hot--arms take Tommy from the Warden.

Tommy’s had about enough of this bullshit. He curls into Mall Idiot’s arms and shuts his eyes.

“Techno,” Phil says softly, he lays a hand on Techno’s shoulder, but Techno doesn’t acknowledge it. Doesn’t seem to feel it, or hear Phil. His eyes are glassy and blank, looking at something far beyond the walls of their apartment.

“Techno you need to take a break,” Phil says. He kneels in front of Techno, laying his hands on his cheeks and pressing their foreheads together. “Techo, mate, come on. Come back.”

Techno doesn’t move. He’s barely breathing.

“You haven’t eaten all day,” Phil tells him, because he probably doesn’t realize, probably doesn’t know how long he’s been looking through the eyes of his shadows.

Looking, but not finding what he’s looking for. *Who* he’s looking for.

“Techno!” Phil says, loud, sharp.

Techno finally blinks, slow and uncertain. “...Phil?”

Phil sighs, resting his head against Techno’s again, “yeah, its me. Come on, you’ve been at it all day.” He grabs Techno’s hand and tries to pull him up.

“I haven’t found him,” Techno says, remaining stoutly unmoved. “He’s out there Phil. I promised he was under my protection and--” Techno breaks off into a low growl. The sort of sound that would have the blood freezing in veins for miles around. Phil is unmoved. “They took him,” Techno says, “and I’m going to *find him* and get him *back*.”

“We,” Phil corrects him. “ *We* will find him. And we will make whoever took him, whoever has him, pay. They’ll fucking *wish* for death before we’re done. But mate, you can’t make them pay if you work yourself to death first.”

Techno sighs, rubbing at his eyes. His shoulder is tense under Phil’s hand, his jaw is clenched tight. “I have to find him.”

“You will,” Phil says, “we will. But first we have to take care of ourselves.” He gently brushes his finger under Techno’s eye, tracing the edge of the dark smudges that have been under them for days now. “You’re tired, love,” he murmurs, “you’re not at your best. You know your range gets limited. Eat, rest, and we will tear this city apart. Together.”

Techno leans into his hand. “Together.”

“I’ll call Will in,” Phil says. “It’s time we give up on being subtle about this.”

Chapter End Notes

:D SBI! They are Looking for Their Boy! and they are going to find him, no matter who gets in their way. Rip to everyone but Tommy.

Chapter 4: Drem

Chapter Summary

Tommy turns sharply to look. There's a man in a chair by his bed. Dark hair, held back by a white headband.

Mall Idiot.

Right. Tubbo. The heroes.

Tommy tries to sit up, but something pinches his hand when he moves it. There's an IV...thing. The needle bit. In his hand, taped down. Putting who the hell knows what in him.

Not on his fucking watch. He picks the tape off. He hesitates, hand on the tube. He's pretty sure that he heard you're not supposed to just rip this shit out but what else is he supposed to do, leave it in? Besides, its a tiny needle, how bad could it hurt? How much damage could it really do?

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

He wakes up to soft beeping. He's in a white room, the lights are dim, there's an IV stand beside him, and beside that, a monitor that traces a green line.

For one confused, heart-stopping moment, Tommy is convinced that he has possessed Schlatt's body.

There's all kinds of weird fucking powers out there, who the hell knows what can happen.

The heart monitor picks up speed, the line it traces growing jagged and sharp. The beeping increases in tempo. Beside him, somebody groans.

Tommy turns sharply to look. There's a man in a chair by his bed. Dark hair, held back by a white headband.

Mall Idiot.

Right. Tubbo. The heroes.

Tommy tries to sit up, but something pinches his hand when he moves it. There's an IV...thing. The needle bit. In his hand, taped down. Putting who the hell knows what in him.

Not on his fucking watch. He picks the tape off. He hesitates, hand on the tube. He's pretty sure that he heard you're not supposed to just rip this shit out but what else is he supposed to do, leave it in? Besides, its a tiny needle, how bad could it hurt? How much damage could it really do?

He yanks it out.

Oh, okay. That's a lot of blood actually. Shit.

He grabs the blanket and presses it against his hand. What the fuck.

The heart monitor is really fucking annoying, actually. And loud. Mall Idiot is shifting in his sleep, like he's starting to wake up. Tommy isn't going to fucking be here when he does.

He swings his legs off the side of the bed and drops himself to the floor. He's still missing his *goddamn shoes* but that's not nearly as much of a deterrent as people seem to think. He's run without shoes before, he'll do it again if he has to.

This time he has somewhere to go back to. Wilbur will probably get him a hundred pairs of shoes if he asks. Or even if he doesn't.

There's some weird paper things on his chest. Like really lame stickers. He pulls them off and the heart monitor loses its absolute shit.

Fuck.

He's got no fucking shoes, he's in hero custody, and the fucking heart monitor is going to wake up Mall Idiot.

He rushes for the door. Better to bolt and hope.

The heart monitor shuts up. The door opens.

Tommy stumbles to a halt.

There's another hero standing in the doorway. The green guy with the white mask. Tommy can see now there's a smiley face carved into it.

Well that's fucking terrifying.

He takes a hesitant step back.

The smiley hero takes one forward. "You're up," he says. His voice is quiet, level, unreadable. His head turns to Mall Idiot, "Sapnap will be happy."

Tommy takes another step back. A chill runs up his spine as Smiley turns back to him. His hands are held behind his back, like he's got some fucked up surprise back there. His body language isn't angry or tense, but Tommy is pretty sure the guy wants to dissect him or some shit anyway.

"You should lay back down," Smiley says, "you're still recovering."

It doesn't sound like one of those things you can say no to. Tommy hesitantly stumbles back to the bed and hauls himself up into it.

Smiley makes a mildly approving sound and stalks silently across the room. Towards the bed, towards Tommy.

“Uh,” Tommy says, scooting back into the pillows, his heart climbing further and further in his throat with every step closer. “You--”

Smiley stops at Mall Idiot’s side, not even looking at Tommy. Oh, that’s fine then. Smiley gently lays a hand on Mall Idiot’s head. “He was worried about you,” he says, still mild, still calm. At least he seems that way. “He took it as a personal failing that you were kidnapped.”

“Oh,” Tommy says, he’s not sure what else to say. He twists his fingers into the hem of his shirt.

Smiley takes a step closer, he’s reaching out, he’s got his full gear on still. Thick gloves, guards on his arms, a belt around his waist with who the hell knows what kind of weapons in it.

He grabs the blanket and flings it over Tommy’s legs. “Let me see your hand,” he holds out his palm. Tommy stares. “You shouldn’t be off the IV yet,” Smiley says, “you’re dehydrated.”

“What’s--what’s in the thing?” Tommy dares to ask, flicking a finger at the bag.

“Saline.”

That doesn’t actually answer literally anything but Smiley is still holding out his hand. Waiting. Tommy’s not sure how much longer he’ll be patient.

Hesitantly, he extends his hand. It looks pale and thin, hovering over Smiley’s palm. Ever so slightly, its shaking.

Smiley is surprisingly gentle when he reaches up those last few inches and grabs it. Gentle, but firm. Tommy is pretty sure that there’s no fucking way he’s getting his hand out of his grip before Smiley lets him go. Cool, cool, great.

Tommy’s breath is a little shaky, too.

Smiley looks up at him. “You’re safe,” he says, quiet and steady.

“What?”

“You’re safe here,” Smiley repeats, “You aren’t with those villains anymore. We’re heroes. We’re here to help you.”

“Okay,” Tommy says, his voice small, but he manages to strangle any disbelief out of it.

“If you tell us your name we’ll get in contact with your parents,” Smiley continues, “unfortunately, you won’t be able to go home.”

“What?” Tommy asks, his heart skipping a beat.

Smiley tilts his head, “one of your former captors was very forthcoming,” he says, “he told us about your abilities.”

Fuck. Fuck.

Fuck, fuck, fuck.

Reflexively, Tommy tries to pull his hand away, but Smiley doesn’t let him move an inch.

“Relax,” he says. “We won’t hurt you. But we also can’t let you fall back into villain hands. You’re in protective custody, now.”

“But--”

Smiley pulls his arm closer, “I need to reset your IV,” he says, “usually George does this but, well. Its three AM, so let’s not wake him up, shall we?” He grabs some weird little pile of shit off the bedside table.

“I--”

Smiley ties something around his elbow, its really fucking tight, but Tommy’s not going to complain.

“Clench your hand into a fist,” Smiley orders, and Tommy obeys. Smiley wipes something cold and wet over the back of his hand and then there’s a painful pinch-tug that makes Tommy gasp and try to pull his hand away.

“Easy,” Smiley says, “almost done.” He pulls something back and then there’s a new IV thing in Tommy’s hand. What the fuck.

Finally, the whole thing is taped down and Tommy’s right fucking back where he started.

“We’ll leave the heart monitor off,” Smiley says, “don’t want to wake up Sapnap.”

Tommy nods mutely, looking down at his lap. He doesn’t know what this guy fucking *wants* from him. He pulls his hand back to his chest and this time Smiley lets him. Thank fuck.

He gently nudges the IV.

“Leave it,” Smiley commands and Tommy snatches his hand away like he’s been burned.

“Yes sir.”

The words hover in the silence between them. Tommy tenses, Schlatt always wanted the formal address, when Tommy was allowed to speak, but Techno, Wilbur, and Phil hated it. He was their equal.

What does Smiley want?

“Go back to sleep, kid,” Smiley says. “Its late, we’ll talk more in the morning.”

“Yes sir,” Tommy whispers. Smiley doesn’t correct him.

He just gets up and nudges Mall Idiot into a position that’s less painful looking and makes his exit. As quiet as he came in.

Tommy doesn’t get a lot of sleep. But he sure as fuck doesn’t make another go for the exit.

Chapter End Notes

A little break from SBI and Dream himself has made an appearance isn't everyone so excited

Never Meet Your Heroes

Chapter Summary

Smiley sits back, watching him from behind his mask. "My name is Dream," he says. Tommy gives him a dubious look.
"Well, my hero name is Dream," He laughs softly. "Now you tell me yours."
"I don't have a hero name," Tommy mutters. He shuts his mouth with a click of his teeth. Idiot. "Sir."
That doesn't actually make it better.

Chapter Notes

Halfway there fam!

"--didn't you wake me up?" someone whines beside him.

Mall Idiot.

Again.

Ugh.

"It was three AM," Smiley says.

Smiley.

Fuck.

Tommy makes his breathing deep and even, smooths out any tension that wants to creep into his muscles.

"So?" Mall Idiot says, "Its not like my sleep schedule is great anyway."

"Exactly. Its important when you *do* get sleep."

"You're such a mother hen."

Smiley snorts and is quiet for a moment, then. "Hey kid. I know you're awake."

Tommy tenses and slowly opens his eyes.

Mall Idiot gasps like Tommy waking up is like seeing a fucking unicorn. “Hi,” he breathes, crouching beside the bed so that his eyes are level with the railing. “I’m Sapnap. Do you--do you remember me?”

What the *fuck* is up with this guy?

“...yeah?” Tommy says because Mall Idiot--Sapnap, apparently--is just sitting there. Staring at him. Waiting.

“Oh,” Sapnap says, and for some reason that’s dimmed the light in his eyes. “I’m glad.”

He doesn’t really seem glad.

“I’m sorry, too,” Sapnap says, like he’s got something to be sorry about. “I let them take you, I should have--”

Smiley lays a hand on his shoulder, “Sap, don’t blame yourself, come on. We’ve talked about this.”

“I know,” Sapnap says quietly. “I just--” he sighs, then looks back at Tommy. “Sorry, you’re just waking up and everything. Kind of dumped that on you huh?”

He looks earnest, and worried.

“It’s fine,” Tommy mutters.

“You should probably tell George that he’s up,” Smiley says, “he’ll want to know.”

“Right,” Sapnap says, standing. He pauses, “are you hungry? I’ll grab you some breakfast too if you want.”

“That sounds good,” Smiley says before Tommy can say anything. “Something mild though.”

“What? Come on, I wasn’t gonna--”

“Yes you were.”

Sapnap sighs, but he doesn’t argue anymore. The door shuts softly behind him and Tommy is alone with Smiley.

Shit.

Smiley drops himself into Sapnap’s chair, his elbows on his knees, hands under his chin. “What’s your name?”

Tommy bites his lip. He’s never really... *been* around heroes. He doesn’t know what the fuck to do with these guys. Villains are easy, or they were. Until he met Wilbur.

Schlatt just wanted respect and obedience, Tommy could do that all day long. Just shut his mouth and do his job, say ‘yes sir’ and ‘no sir’ at the right times and he could avoid the anger, the danger.

He doesn’t know how to handle heroes.

Smiley sits back, watching him from behind his mask. “My name is Dream,” he says.

Tommy gives him a dubious look.

“Well, my hero name is Dream,” He laughs softly. “Now you tell me yours.”

“I don’t have a hero name,” Tommy mutters. He shuts his mouth with a *click* of his teeth. Idiot. “Sir.”

That doesn’t actually make it better.

“You don’t have to call me that,” Dream says, “I’m not much of a ‘sir’ really.”

Tommy nods mutely.

“Do you not want us to contact your parents?” Dream asks, “is that why you don’t want to give up your name?”

Tommy shrugs, “don’t have any.”

Dream hums, nodding slowly, “foster kid?”

Tommy shrugs again.

“Homeless, then. Running from the system?”

Tommy clenches his jaw. How the *fuck* is this asshole reading him so easily. Does he have some sort of mental power? He wracks his brain, but he’s never kept up with heroes. The only thing he knows about Dream is that he fights with a staff, and that’s just from seeing the guy go up against Techno like two months ago.

“Streets are dangerous for someone like you,” Dream says, “not really surprising you got picked up.”

Tommy’s shoulders hunch in. He wants Dream to shut his goddamn mouth, but he’s not dumb enough to shout at the guy.

“You don’t need to worry about that now,” Dream says, “we’ll keep you safe. No villains will be able to get to you here.”

The problem with that is that Tommy *wants* villains to get to him. One very specific group of villains, in fact.

The door opens and Sapnap bursts back in, trailed by another guy.

“Hey,” he says casually, “how are you feeling?”

“Fine,” Tommy says even though he’s feeling kind of light headed from all the fucking whiplash he’s gettting. Who are these people? What the *fuck* do they want? Why are there so *many* of them?

Dream is still sitting next to him and that’s fucking stressful enough because he’s not in his full costume anymore but that just means Tommy can see how muscular he is. He’s really fucking muscular.

Alright not as much as like, Techno but enough. He could tear Tommy apart if he wanted to and he really hasn’t seemed super happy with Tommy thus far.

“Kid?” Sapnap asks, and Tommy realizes that they must have asked him another question and he’s just been sitting here.

“I’m fine.”

Sapnap doesn’t look very convinced.

“Right,” the new guy says, “Dream says you pulled your IV last night,” there’s a disapproving note in his voice and Tommy can’t help but shrink back.

“Yeah.”

“Don’t do that in the future,” New Guy says, he walks past Dream and snags Tommy’s hand. Tommy flinches, pulling it away automatically.

Then he freezes, because he doesn’t know what they want. He doesn’t know how angry they’ll get at him. They’re called heroes, but that doesn’t mean they’re good people. It just means they’re powerful and the public is okay with them running around beating people up.

New Guy slowly reaches out and grabs his hand again. Tommy doesn’t pull it away. He looks down, shoulders hunched.

Sapnap makes an unhappy sound, “its okay, its just George. He’s got the lamest power--”

George smacks Sapnap upside the head, “I’ll show you lame in a second.”

“Please behave,” Dream sighs.

“Or what? You’ll make us take a nap?”

“Don’t tempt me.”

Sapnap laughs, loud and ringing. Tommy only sees it because he’s watching the guy so carefully, but Dream tenses for a split second. Like he’s surprised. His mask tilted towards Sapnap. And then he relaxes, like he’s relieved.

Weird.

George finally lets go of his hand, “looks fine, you did a good job,” he addresses this final bit to Dream.

“I’ve watched you do it enough,” he shrugs.

“Right, well, you should be good. I’m leaving that in for a little longer because you were a little shit last night, but you aren’t injured and you seem to be perking up. I think you were just overdrawn. They had you healing that Schlatt guy right?”

Tommy’s heart flutters behind his ribs. They talk about it so *casually*. Like they’re not referencing the thing that has defined his life, that has denied him his freedom. His power isn’t some casual thing, its a fucking nightmare.

They’re waiting for a response. He nods stiffly, his eyes on the blanket.

“Bastards,” Sapnap growls. “They’ve all been arrested now, don’t worry. I mean, the Angel and his crew are still out there, but they wouldn’t come here. They know they can’t beat us on our home turf.”

There’s a note of pride in his voice, a certainty that makes Tommy’s heart sink.

“Eat your breakfast, kid.” Dream orders.

Tommy obeys.

(Not So) Sweet Dreams

Chapter Summary

“What the fuck do you want?” Tommy snarls, his voice is hoarse and croaky.

“I was just--are you okay?”

Tommy narrows his eyes.

“Do you...remember the last time you woke up?”

Tommy looks to the IV, only its not in his hand anymore. There's just a cotton ball taped to his skin.

The door opens, “Sapnap you were supposed to tell me when he was awake.” Dream.

Great.

Tommy shrinks in on himself.

“You alright kid?”

“He's fine,” Sapnap growls, “now that you're not mining his brain for information.”

What?

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

There are eyes on the back of his neck.

He is in his room, his cell. The walls are rusted, dripping with shadows, the air is cold. So cold that his breath is misting, but he doesn't shiver.

He stands and walks to the door. The shadows laugh as he passes them, *foolish boy, it will be locked. It is always locked.*

But it opens before he even touches the handle.

Beyond it there is a familiar street. The light is blinding, the air is frigid. He runs out into it anyway.

The shadows nip at his heels panting, their ember eyes burn with bloodlust. The crowd is screaming around him, Siren's voice is louder than them all, singing terror into their veins.

Tommy pulls away, he is alone. Schlatt doesn't know he's escaped yet, but he'll figure it out, he'll know. He'll be furious. There is nothing he hates more than disloyalty.

Someone is watching him. He can feel the weight of their eyes as he runs.

Snow crunches under his feet, Will is behind him. Waiting. Willing to let him go, but for how long? How much of a head start does he get?

The park is empty when he arrives, the ducks waddle across the frozen surface of the pond.

The shadows devour them all in a blur of blood and feathers.

The Angel of Death looms over him, reaching with his deadly hands, his face is soft, welcoming. Inviting Tommy to a softer death than anyone else would grant him.

He reaches back.

There is a hand hovering over him, there are more on his shoulders. Someone is making a terrible frightened sound. Like a dog whining when a hand is raised.

“Its okay, you’re okay,” someone is saying. There’s a face hovering over him, wide eyes, eyebrows pinched together, worried. They look worried.

“Sapnap back off, you’re not helping.”

“I’m doing more than you!”

Tommy flinches from the shout, tries to writhe out from under the hands.

“What the fuck were you thinking?! You can’t just--”

“Don’t yell at me! It was Dream’s idea!”

“Both of you stop yelling, you’re freaking him out more!”

“Now you’re yelling!”

“Because its the only way to be heard over his fucking panic attack now shut up!”

They all fall silent, there is only the dog-whimper ringing in his ears. He wants to tell whoever it is to just leave the dog alone. He can’t catch his breath enough to say anything.

A hand reaches for him and the whine turns into a yelp, a scream that sounds disturbingly human, disturbingly close, familiar. Oh. that’s his voice.

There is no dog.

The hand touches his temple and he flinches, tries to scramble away.

“Shh, its alright, just go to sleep.”

He obeys.

His throat is sore. Tommy wheezes softly and raises a hand to it, as though that will help.

“Hey,” someone says, Mall Idiot. Sapnap. Tommy tenses. “You’re okay,” Sapnap says, “it’s just me, you’re safe.”

Tommy coughs and winces at the pain that spikes through his throat.

“Here,” Sapnap says, turning swiftly to the bedside table, “Ice water.”

A straw touches his lips and Tommy flinches back reflexively. He gets ahold of himself and reaches for the cup. Sapnap doesn’t let him hold it, but going by how shaky he feels, that’s probably smart. Tommy takes a small sip, and then a deeper one when he doesn’t taste anything off about the water.

He drinks about half of it before he pulls away.

Sapnap sets the cup back on the nightstand and then just... *watches him*.

His face is concerned, his eyes darting over Tommy like he expects him to disappear.

“What the fuck do you want?” Tommy snarls, his voice is hoarse and croaky.

“I was just--are you okay?”

Tommy narrows his eyes.

“Do you...remember the last time you woke up?”

Tommy looks to the IV, only its not in his hand anymore. There’s just a cotton ball taped to his skin.

The door opens, “Sapnap you were supposed to tell me when he was awake.” Dream. Great.

Tommy shrinks in on himself.

“You alright kid?”

“He’s fine,” Sapnap growls, “now that you’re not mining his brain for information.”

What?

What the fuck?

“What?”

Dream and Sapnap break off glaring at each other. “Dream,” Sapnap says, sending an accusing glare at Dream, “had George poke into your dreams. You had a nightmare and since George makes dreams more real you were stuck in it.”

“He won’t even tell us his name,” Dream says, crossing his arms, “we need all the information we can get if we’re going to stop them.”

“You were digging in my *head*?!” Tommy demands, his voice cuts out, his throat feels like its on fire but he doesn’t care. He scrambles away, pulling himself over the railing on the far side so the bed is between him and them. Sapnap is standing, reaching for him.

“Kid, wait, its okay, I won’t let him--”

“Get back in bed,” Dream says, coming towards him.

“Fuck off!” Tommy snarls, backing away. Dream keeps advancing. “Get the fuck away from me!”

His back hits the wall. Fuck. His legs give out and he slides down to the floor.

Sapnap grabs Dream by the arm, “you’re scaring him! *Again*. Back off.”

“Sapnap,” Dream sighs.

“Dream, leave the kid alone! He’s scared!”

“There are people dying, Sapnap!” Dream flings an arm out towards the windows.

The city is visible through the blue-tinted glass. There is a plume of smoke rising from the skyline.

What the fuck?

Sapnap crouches in front of him, just out of arm’s reach. “Hey, kid, its okay. Dream won’t hurt you, neither of us will. We’re heroes, remember?”

He says that like its supposed to make Tommy trust him.

Dream is standing behind him, arms crossed, shoulders tense, fingers tapping.

“Don’t worry about him,” Sapnap says, drawing Tommy’s eye back to him. “Just breathe for a second. You want me to count for you?”

“Fuc--” Tommy sucks in a breath, “Fuck off.”

“I just want to help you,” Sapnap says, he won’t just fucking *leave*. Neither of them will.

Dream is still watching him from behind his mask.

“What the fuck is going on?” Tommy rasps.

“Your friends are looking for you,” Dream says, “violently.”

“They’re not his friends!” Sapnap growls. “We won’t let them find you, don’t worry. We’ll keep you safe.”

“We need any information you may have that would give us an edge against them. You’re the only one who’s spent much time with them and didn’t end up dead. To our knowledge.”

“I don’t--I don’t know anything.”

“See?” Sapnap says, “he doesn’t know. Leave him alone, he’s been through enough.”

Dream huffs, “I have work to do,” he growls, and then he sweeps out of the room.

“Sorry about him,” Sapnap says as soon as the door is shut behind him. “He’s--its nothing personal, okay? He’s just -- you remember that hero at the mall? The one who the Blade--”

Stabbed. Yeah. Tommy remembers him. He swallows and nods. Techno isn’t harmless to everyone else the way he is to Tommy, its hard to remember that sometimes.

Thinking of the way the hero had fallen, limp, impaled by Techno’s sword makes it easier.

“He was Dream’s friend,” Sapnap says, “Dream was the one to tell him to take the shot before we got there to back him up. He blames himself for not saving him. He really wants to take out the Blade, justice you know?”

It sounds more like revenge to Tommy, but heroes like to use prettier words for things.

“Its nothing against you, he’s just driven and sometimes he gets tunnel vision. I’m sorry you had to deal with that though.”

“You said--they’re looking for me?”

Sapnap glances to the plume of smoke, still rising thick and dark through the sky. “Yeah. They are. We won’t let them find you though, its okay.”

These are heroes. If he tells them that he *wants* to go back to the Angel of Death they’ll arrest him. But they’re *heroes*, they’re idiots. Especially this guy.

“You should give me back to them,” he whispers. It isn’t hard to make his voice shaky, “I don’t want other people to get hurt.”

“Oh kid,” Sapnap murmurs, he scoots a bit closer, reaches out. Tommy stiffens, but he doesn’t stop. His hand is on Tommy’s shoulder, unnaturally hot. “Never. We’ll never let them take you. We’ll beat them, you’ll see.”

George bursts into the room, “Sapnap we’ve got to go.”

“What’s happening?”

“They’re hitting the prison.”

The fire is spreading very nicely behind them, enough to keep the heroes occupied for awhile. Long enough for them to do their work.

This is no Vault. Its not the place they built to contain the most dangerous of society.

Not that it would have mattered if it were. Wilbur is accompanied by the men who'd destroyed that place. Breaking in is so much easier than breaking out.

The occupants of the cells are yelling, screaming to be released, snarling threats, offering help, money, anything. They all fall silent as they see who it is that has broken in.

Wilbur grins, dark and deadly and *dangerous*.

Techno's shadows flood the room, hissing laughter as the inmates cower to the back of their cells. Seeking the brightest parts of their dimly lit rooms.

Phil steps into the room, the fearful whispers of the inmates die as though Phil has touched the words.

He waits, letting the silence linger, the tension build.

Finally: "Hello."

The word is quiet, mild, almost friendly.

The guy in the cell nearest Wilbur visibly flinches, his hand pressing over his heart as if that would protect it.

"We've heard," Phil says, "that there are some new inmates in here. People who I'd like to have a chat with. They had something of mine."

The silence is suffocating.

A hand, shaky and hesitant, points down the hall. "Th-they're in the other wing."

"Oh," Phil chirps, "our bad! Thank you!"

The shadows swarm ahead of them, eyes gleaming eagerly. Wilbur follows them, humming to himself. Nothing in particular, just something to bring his power to the forefront, just enough to let anyone in earshot know what's coming.

They took Tommy. They took his little brother. *His*.

They're going to pay for that.

The shadows laugh as they find a guard standing before them. His gun is drawn by shaking hands, but it is still drawn.

"Out of the way mate," Phil says. The gun jerks up to point at him.

The shadows snarl and lunge for his throat. He doesn't have time to pull the trigger.

"Techno," Phil says, mildly disapproving.

"He was pointing a gun at you."

Phil smiles, soft and warm, "mate, you were the one who reinforced this thing." He motions to the cloth over his chest, "I'm good against bullets now. I'm probably good against anti-tank missiles."

Techno grunts and kicks the guard's gun away from lifeless fingers as he goes. Sap.

Techno's shadows plunge into the lock, sparks fly for a moment, and then the door opens.

Phil steps into the room, his smile shows too many teeth, his wings flare, feathers bristled, his hands twitch with the desire to rip the life out of the fools who dared take their Tommy.

Wilbur and Techno fall back to his shoulders, there will be plenty of death to go around.

Chapter End Notes

So a little clarification: George's power is that he can look into someone's mind by touching them. He's best at it with the unconscious mind but he can do awake people too. He wasn't doing it when he did Tommy's IV, it takes some concentration, but things got a bit more desperate once SBI really started looking for Tommy.

An Eye for an Eye

Chapter Summary

“That’s all I know,” the guy is saying, “I swear, that’s all the information I have.”

Phil hums, “then that’s all the use you have.”

The guy’s eyes widen and he opens his mouth. He draws in a breath.

Its his last.

He falls to the floor.

Chapter Notes

SBI chapter! no heroes to be seen here at all (unfortunately for everyone else) However, SBI is uh. Not in a friendly mood so, Warnings for:

Murder

Implied/referenced maiming

Implied/referenced torture

Nothing is really shown and it just fades to black

Also :D Techno POV chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“And then some hero kid showed up and next thing I know there’s a whole fucking pack of them,” the guy says desperately.

Phil laughs, “yeah, they tend to do that mate. Damn pain isn’t it?”

The guy laughs, a note of relief in it. Like he thinks that Phil being friendly is a sign that he won’t kill him.

Idiot.

Techno leans against the wall, letting his eyes slip closed. His shadows will keep an eye on everything for him. They whisper about every motion, every twitch. One of them snaps at a guy who is edging a hand under his bunk. Probably some makeshift shiv. As if that would help him against them.

One of the prisoners is huddled in the back of his cell. The shadow tilts its head, there’s something...the shadow steps closer. He smells like Tommy.

Techno opens his eyes.

“That’s all I know,” the guy is saying, “I swear, that’s all the information I have.”

Phil hums, “then that’s all the use you have.”

The guy’s eyes widen and he opens his mouth. He draws in a breath.

It’s his last.

He falls to the floor.

Techno steps over his body, bypasses the next cell.

“Techno?” Phil asks.

Techno stops in front of the guy who has Tommy’s scent on his hands. “You.”

He looks up. He’s small, skinny. He looks scared.

He’s smart then.

“You were near him,” Techno says. “What did you do to him.”

The guy’s eyes widen and he raises his hands, scrambling back as Wilbur and Phil prowl to Techno’s side.

“Listen, listen man I was a prisoner too! I didn’t--I was just in charge of taking care of the kid! I didn’t hurt him! I tried to keep him as safe as I could. The first time I helped him escape and everything!”

The shadows snap to attention and gather closer.

“The first time?” Wilbur asks, slipping forward, stepping into the cell. The guy flinches.

“I--”

“You had him before,” Wilbur says, “you were the ones who hurt him. You’re the ones who made him so scared.” There is fire burning in his eyes, Phil is tense beside Techno.

The shadows chant, demanding blood.

“Schlatt!” the guy squeaks, “Schlatt did! I never laid a fucking hand on that kid! I was a prisoner just as much as him! I swear!”

“Siren,” Phil says.

Wilbur hums thoughtfully, still staring down at the guy. “Tell me,” he says, leaning so close that their noses are almost touching, “tell me where this ‘Schlattt’ guy is.”

“Hospital wing,” the guy breathes, shrinking back into the wall. “Please, I tried to help the kid. I did!”

Wilbur tilts his head, considering.

“What do you think?” Phil says, a slight frown on his lips.

“Could be lying,” Techno says, but he finds he’s inclined to believe the guy. He wouldn’t be usually, he’s nothing if not a pessimist, but this guy seems genuine enough.

“I’m not,” the guy pleads, daring to turn away from Wilbur to look at Techno. “I swear it’s the truth.”

Will hums, not convinced. “What did ‘taking care’ of him entail?”

“I fed him,” the guy says, “I did my best to keep him out of the line of fire when Schlatt was pissed. I took him to and from his room when someone needed healing. I never hurt a hair on his head I swear. I wanted to help him get out but last time Schlatt nearly killed me.”

Phil looks to Techno.

“Kill the rest,” Techno says, “leave him with a reminder.”

“Works for me,” Phil says.

Wilbur frowns, staring down at the guy. Finally, he says, “I’ll ask him about you. If I find out you’re lying, I’ll hunt you like a dog.”

“Sure thing, sure thing man.”

“Go help Phil,” Techno orders, nudging Wilbur out of the way. “I’ll deal with this one.”

Will grunts, but stalks past him obediently enough. Techno steps into the cell. The guy presses himself against the wall.

“What--what are you doing?”

“Sorry pal,” Techno says, not really feeling all that sorry. “Gotta send a message and all.”

The guy scrambles back, “I tried to help him!”

“But you were still there,” Techno says, the shadows gather behind him, whispering eagerly. “Nobody touches him. Nobody takes what’s ours. We protect our own.”

They arrive in the hospital wing quietly. There are people trying to recover, after all. The ram-horned man is easy to find.

He looks like shit.

Techno looks down at him dispassionately. His shadows pounce onto the white sheets, watching him with luminous eyes. Begging to be allowed to tear into him.

Techno holds them back. This isn't his kill to make.

The kill should probably belong to Tommy, but he's a bit young for that.

He looks to Wilbur instead.

He was the one who found Tommy, he was the one who earned his trust, the one who first saw what this man did to him.

"Wake up," Wilbur croons to him.

Phil is at the foot of his bed, looking at his chart, Schlatt's eyes fall on him first. They widen and he wheezes.

Phil looks up and grins, "hey mate," he says. "I wouldn't be worried about me if I were you." He motions to Wilbur.

Wilbur isn't smiling, isn't eager, isn't sharp teeth and leashed violence. He's dead silent, still as the grave, his eyes burn. He looks like he did after he heard about where Phil and Techno came from. He looks like he did the day he declared that no one, *no one*, took his family, hurt his family.

"Hello," Wilbur says, "you hurt my little brother."

Schlatt looks terrified.

He's a smart one at least. Not that it will do him much good.

They walk out of the prison, vengeance accomplished. They have a start for where to look for Tommy. The heroes are easy to find, Techno will send out his shadows and see which one of them has him.

They're going to get him back.

"Blade!" The voice is a roar, furious, challenging. Techno turns.

Oh. This guy.

Dream extends his staff, "you're going to pay for what you did," he snarls.

Techno would really rather go find Tommy, but if he insists. Wilbur handled Schlatt, but the shadows are still whispering for blood. He can indulge them, they've been working hard for the past few days.

Chapter End Notes

So technically, there are Laws that say Punz and Dream are the only named characters who can die, but I've made an exception and added Schlatt to the Can Die list as long as he's an antagonist. I'm sure nobody is too torn up about him dying here. The Sacred Law of "always happy ending" is still fully in place, no worries.

Also Q was def lying to them about helping Tommy escape the first time, Tommy did that on his own. But he's got his Charm and while it wasn't fully effective (and it doesn't work on Wilbur, btw, people with mental powers can't affect each other) he lived! He's an eye down, but he lived.

Dream u Bitch

Chapter Summary

The heroes have been gone for hours, he has no idea when they'll get back but he's running out of time. Every minute counts, but he's still stuck in this same stupid fucking room.

There's no visible lock to keep the doors shut, but they sure as fuck don't open. He's like a million stories off the ground so trying to break the window isn't an option. He's finally unsupervised, but this fucking place may as well be a prison.

God damn it.

Chapter Notes

I will remind everyone that I have asked that you be chill in the comments. I don't really like anger even if its not directed at me. That being said, enjoy the chapter :)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The doors are locked.

The heroes are gone and this is Tommy's best--only--chance of getting out of here. If he could just *get out of here*.

The heroes have been gone for hours, he has no idea when they'll get back but he's running out of time. Every minute counts, but he's still stuck in this same stupid fucking room.

There's no visible lock to keep the doors shut, but they sure as fuck don't open. He's like a million stories off the ground so trying to break the window isn't an option. He's finally unsupervised, but this fucking place may as well be a prison.

God *damn it*.

Tommy kicks the door. It doesn't make it miraculously spring open. It doesn't even make him feel better. Fucking thing is *solid*.

“--ream don't you fucking *dare!*” Someone shouts on the other side. Sapnap. He sounds pissed.

Really pissed.

The door beeps and opens. Sapnap is standing there, his hand on Dream's shoulder. They look like shit. There's blood dripping down from Sapnap's forehead, he's got a cast on one arm and he's clearly not putting weight on one leg.

Dream's cloak is singed and torn, his mask is cracked and Tommy can see one green eye burning from behind it. He looks really fucking pissed.

They both look really fucking pissed.

Tommy takes a wary step back.

Dream's attention *snaps* to him and he freezes again. "You," Dream snarls, stalking forward, he's limping but that doesn't make him any less terrifying.

Sapnap yanks him back, "Dream!" he shouts, "leave him be!"

"No! This is his fucking fault, and he's going to fucking fix it."

Dream jerks his arm out of Sapnap's hands. They face each other, silent, tense.

"He's just a--"

"He works for them!" Dream roars, "you saw the footage just the same as I did! He's one of them! Do you think they're tearing the city apart looking for him just for the fun of it?!"

Fuck. *fuck, fuck, fuck*. Tommy hesitantly takes another step back. There's nowhere to go. They're in front of the door. He's trapped, he's cornered.

"He's a kid! I'm not letting you do this Dream."

Dream is silent, and then he says lowly, "you can't stop me." Sapnap's eyes widen, and then Dream's hand touches his forehead and they shut. He goes boneless.

Dream catches him and lowers him with surprising gentleness to the floor. And then he turns to Tommy.

Through the crack in his mask, Tommy can see the absolute rage on his face. He's completely and utterly *furious*. Tommy opens his mouth but the only thing that comes out is a pathetic croak.

He stumbles back as Dream stalks forward, dangerous and predator and angry. "You little fucking *shit*," he snarls.

Tommy's back hits the wall. There's nowhere left to go. There's nowhere to run, no way to fight. He drops to the floor, curls into himself. His breath is coming in tiny ragged gasps. Dream is angry, and Tommy is only a healer. He can't fight. He's never been able to fight. Just take blow after blow and heal himself afterwards.

Dream grabs him by the scruff of the neck and yanks him upwards. "You're going to come with me," he snarls, "and you're going to fix what they did. Am I understood?"

“Yes,” Tommy gasps, “yes, yes. I understand sir, I’m sorry. I’m sorry sir.”

Dream growls and hauls him forward. “Walk.”

Tommy walks.

They go out of the room, into an elevator, down to the ground floor. Dream shoves him into the passenger side of a car. “If you try to get out I will fucking end you.”

Tommy huddles in the seat and doesn’t so much as look at the door.

He has no idea where they’re going. Just that Dream is driving too fast, taking turns too sharp, stopping with a heavy slam on the breaks. If he hadn’t buckled his seatbelt he’d be flung around the car. As it is he’s still going to end up with bruises.

They stop and Dream yanks the key out of the ignition and throws himself out of the car. The door slams behind him and Tommy flinches. He doesn’t know what to do. Get out? Stay put? He doesn’t know what Dream wants.

He just needs to know what he wants. He’ll do it. He’ll give him whatever it is.

His door is flung open.

“Get out.”

Tommy obeys.

Dream’s hand returns to the back of his neck, nails digging into his skin as he drags Tommy across a parking lot. Tommy stumbles, but Dream’s grip keeps him from going down.

Doors swish open ahead of them. There are people shouting, alarms beeping, people crying, screaming. Where is this, where is he? What does Dream *want*?

Tommy’s breath is still coming too fast, too shallow, his eyes are burning and he can feel tears streaming down his face. He can’t do anything but let Dream drag him down a hall. Fluorescent lights are overhead, the tile underfoot is white.

“Dream what--” someone says, but Dream snarls wordlessly at them and they shut up. Dream stops and opens a door.

The room beyond is dark and quiet, it makes Tommy’s gasping sobs all the more obvious. There is a heart monitor beeping, slow and shallow. There is the click-hiss of a ventilator that Tommy recognizes from Schlatt. But it isn’t Schlatt on the bed. Its George.

He looks terrible, even wrapped in layers of bandages. There are so many bandages. So many injuries.

“Your friends did this to him,” Dream says. He’s still angry, but now there is a note of exhaustion in his voice. He’s speaking quietly, like he’s afraid he’ll wake George up.

Tommy isn't sure *anything* could wake him up.

Dream yanks him closer to George and grabs Tommy's wrist, his grip bruising. He lays Tommy's hand on George's chest. "Heal him."

Tommy obeys.

George is more injured than anyone Tommy has healed probably ever. Tommy sinks power into him and he takes and takes, and *takes*. Tommy whines, even as the trance softens his fear. Its too much. He's too hurt.

He tries to pull his hand away but Dream won't let him move it. He's saying something but his voice is so far away. George's injuries are healing, the pulse of the heart monitor growing more frequent, stronger.

Tommy's knees give out.

"Alright, alright," someone mumbles, "shit. Okay. You waking up kid?"

Tommy whines and tries to curl into a ball. There are hands on his shoulders, keeping him upright but he wants nothing more than to be allowed to fall to the floor.

"Come on, look at me."

He obeys, or he tries. His eyelids surely weigh a ton each, his vision is blurry. He can make out a shape in green.

He whines and tries to pull away, but his limbs weigh even more than his eyelids. He's so tired. He's so scared. But he can't move, he can't run. He sobs.

Dream pulls him to his chest, letting Tommy hide in his shoulder. "Alright," he says, "alright. You're alright."

But he *isn't*.

"I--" Dream says, his hand hesitantly settles on Tommy's back. Tommy tries to shrink away with a fearful wheeze. "Fuck, I'm sorry," Dream murmurs.

The door opens, light spills over them.

"Dream," Sapnap says, his voice is quiet. His voice is disappointed.

Dream winces, Tommy can feel his shoulders curve inwards.

"I had to," he says, "I couldn't let him die."

Sapnap sighs. "You were angry," he says, judgement in his voice.

"Yeah," Dream whispers. "I was scared, and it made me angry. I can't lose him too, Sap."

“And you took it out on a kid. A kid under *our protection*, Dream.”

“He--”

“You *know* how Philza operates! The kid is a healer, he was living on the fucking streets! Of course he took the kindness and the food!”

Dream’s hand clenches in the back of Tommy’s shirt. Tommy shrinks away, hardly daring to breathe.

“I know,” Dream’s voice is quiet, defeated.

“I thought you were better than this, man,” Sapnap says.

“I know.”

“Is he okay?”

“Seems to be,” Dream murmurs. “I gave him energy, he’ll--he’ll live.”

“Let me see him,” Sapnap orders, and Dream shuffles him into arms that are unnaturally hot. Tommy lays still and hopes that he won’t be burnt.

“Hey kid, you okay?”

His shoulders twitch curling feebly in, but Tommy doesn’t do anything more. Just let them do what they will. Just behave and deal with the fallout later. Just be good and put up with all the bad. All the anger.

A too-warm hand wipes away a tear as it falls. “Aw kid,” Sapnap says.

Tommy swallows and tries to stifle the sob that wants to follow.

He just wants--he wants Wilbur, and Phil, and Techno. He wants to be safe.

“I’ll see if they can spare a bed for him,” Dream says, “and have them check on George.”

Sapnap doesn’t answer, but he must nod, because Dream’s footsteps recede and the door clicks shut behind him. Sapnap pulls Tommy close to his chest, “I keep failing you,” he murmurs into Tommy’s hair. “Bit of a shit hero aren’t I?”

Tommy doesn’t fucking care, he just wants--

He wants to go *home*.

Chapter End Notes

Note on Dream's Power: it isn't just putting people to sleep. he can move energy around. Usually he just takes enough to knock somebody out, but he can also give energy as well. Usually he boosts his teammates and such. This time he gave Tommy energy so he wouldn't go into a coma and/or die :D

Home

Chapter Summary

The hallway is empty. There is nobody watching him. Nobody to stop him. He steps out of the room. Walks down the hallway.

Everything feels cold and distant, like he's walking through a dream. He doesn't stop. He doesn't care if it's only a dream. He just wants to get away from all of them. Away from all of this.

It's too easy. It's far too easy. It can't be real. He can't be getting away just like this.

Click, click, buzzz. Thunk.

Tommy turns slowly. There is a vending machine at the end of the hall, and Sapnap is bent in front of it. Pulling whatever he bought out of the bottom.

He turns, as if sensing Tommy's eyes on him.

"Kid?"

Tommy bolts.

Chapter Notes

Well here we are fam, last chapter of Fool's Paradise. Thank you to everyone who's read and interacted! ^.^ I still have a lot of stuff in this universe so I hope you aren't tired of it yet lol. I've got a oneshot from Sapnap's POV set directly after this that'll go up tomorrow and then a bunch of prequel things, getting into everyone's backstory. And I'm currently working on a Tubbo side story that is set a few months after Fool's Paradise. I hope to see you all there, enjoy the last chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

He wakes up and he's alone. He's in a blank room, on a bed. There's nobody watching him. It's dark and quiet. Not silent. He can hear people talking and moving somewhere beyond the door.

There is nobody watching him.

He carefully lowers his feet to the floor.

It's cold, he's still barefoot. His feet are sore from walking over the asphalt of the parking lot earlier.

They've been through worse.

He stands and creeps to the door.

Its unlocked.

He nearly sobs, but he bites his tongue. He twists the handle and pokes his head out.

Its a hospital. He probably should have figured that out earlier. He's only seen them on TV and he was a bit *distracted* earlier.

The memory of Dream's rage makes a shiver run down his spine.

The hallway is empty. There is nobody watching him. Nobody to stop him. He steps out of the room. Walks down the hallway.

Everything feels cold and distant, like he's walking through a dream. He doesn't stop. He doesn't care if its only a dream. He just wants to get away from all of them. Away from all of this.

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Tommy turns slowly. There is a vending machine at the end of the hall, and Sapnap is bent in front of it. Pulling whatever he bought out of the bottom.

He turns, as if sensing Tommy's eyes on him.

“Kid?”

Tommy bolts.

“Kid wait!” Sapnap shouts, but Tommy isn't listening.

He sprints as fast as he can down the hall, around the corner. There's a set of double doors. Tommy slams into them and they burst open. He stumbles, he was braced for them to be locked. He catches himself on his hands, scrambles a few steps forward on all fours and then pushes himself back up to his feet.

“Kid!” Sapnap shouts again, “hold on!”

Tommy nearly crashes head first into the reception desk. Belatedly he realizes he's in the front lobby. There's a wall of windows before him. Outside its night. The lights of the city and the moon are the only thing keeping back the darkness.

Tommy's feet slap over the tile, pad over the rug. He shoves the doors, they don't move. No. No no no no. He's so close.

He yanks them. They open

Oh thank fuck.

“Kid!” Sapnap tries again, much closer, too close. He’s going to catch up.

Tommy smothers a whine and throws himself into the parking lot. The asphalt is rough on his bare feet, but he doesn’t care. He’s getting out, he’s getting away. He’s not staying here.

The doors open again behind him. He picks a direction and bolts.

He can hear Sapnap’s feet pounding behind him. His legs are getting sore, his lungs ache, a stitch is developing in his side. He rounds the front of the hospital.

He needs to get to the alleys. He has no idea where he is but he lived on the streets for three years. He’ll have a better chance of navigating them than some hero, surely.

Around the back of the hospital now. He doesn’t know how he’s staying ahead of Sapnap. He doesn’t know how his heart hasn’t exploded, how his legs haven’t given out under him.

He flies past the staff parking, past the dumpster, into the road. Across the grassy patch in the middle.

Something bites into his foot.

Tommy yelps and stumbles. Limps the rest of the way across the road.

“Fuck,” he hisses. He can feel the pain pulsing up his leg. He braces himself on a building. His foot is covered in blood already. Shit. Something glints in the bottom of his foot. Glass. God damn it.

“Are you hurt?” Sapnap asks.

Fuck.

Tommy lets his foot go, tries to stumble back but the minute it touches the ground the glass stabs deeper. He cries out and falls. He scrapes his shoulder on the building, lands hard on the ground.

“Easy, its just me kid,” Sapnap says, “its just me. I’m not gonna hurt you. I want to help. I know you’re scared. I know Dream scared you. I’m sorry.”

“Fuck off,” Tommy snaps, scooting back.

Its over. He knows its over. He should surrender, should apologize, submit. Try to mitigate the punishment. He tried to run. He got caught. Its over.

Dream told him if he tried to run he’d kill him.

Sapnap kneels in front of him. He doesn’t look angry. Not yet. “You’re safe,” he says between panting breaths, “Dream won’t hurt you. Neither will I, or anyone else.”

Tommy stares at him, eyes wide, breath coming too fast. His heart feels like its going to break his ribs with how hard its beating against them. His foot is bleeding, sending creeping

agony up his leg. He can't run. He can't fight.

Sapnap creeps an inch closer.

Tommy whimpers.

Something in the dark behind him *growls*.

Tommy flinches away. Sapnap's hand grabs his arm.

He gasps, but he can't draw enough breath to scream. Sapnap pulls him close as a shape detaches itself from the wall.

It's something human, something animal, all darkness and vague shapes. Except for burning eyes in the depths of the darkness.

A shadow.

One of Techno's shadows.

"Fuck," Sapnap breathes. He tugs Tommy close, "it's okay, it's just one. I can take one."

A whispering laugh mocks him, and another shadow stalks towards them from across the street. Tommy meets its burning ember-eyes and he knows that somewhere, Techno is watching him through them.

He sobs and reaches out for the shadows.

"Kid!" Sapnap cries, and he tugs him away. Wraps his arms over Tommy's chest and stands. "You're not getting him," he tells the shadows. He pulls one hand away and flames dance across his skin. "I won't let you."

"Let me go!" Tommy snarls, his voice is breathy, his hands weak where they try to pry Sapnap's arm away.

The shadows snarl, drawing closer. Sapnap wards them away with the flames. "Kid, calm down, I won't let them hurt you but you have to--"

"I'd be more worried about yourself mate."

They both freeze.

"Phil!" Tommy cries, he tries again to pry Sapnap's arm off. Sapnap lets him go. Unprepared, Tommy falls to the ground at his feet.

He steps over Tommy, so that he has one foot on either side of him. "I'm not letting you touch him," he growls.

Wilbur stalks forward, stopped only by Techno's hand on his shoulder. His face is set in rage, his hands fisted at his sides. Techno's shadows gather around them, cutting off any route of

escape for Sapnap.

Tommy scoots carefully, subtly back.

Wilbur's eyes catch the movement and he draws himself up, "I really don't think you get an opinion on the matter."

Sapnap tenses, his hands cradle flames that make the shadows' eyes dance. Tommy scoots carefully back, closer to them. Closer.

"Thanks for watching him, mate," Phil says, "but we'll take him back now."

"No!" Sapnap barks, "I won't let you!"

The shadow nearest him reaches out and gently catches Tommy's sleeve. He is tugged into the heart of the group as Sapnap whips around too late.

"Kid!" he cries, but he doesn't dare unleash his flames. In his moment of inattention, Techno lunges.

He grabs the hero around the throat, and he looks set to strangle him, or snap his neck, or just pin him down so the shadows can do the work.

"Wait," Tommy says, his voice is quiet and hoarse, but Techno still hears him. Still listens. He pins the hero, but he doesn't kill him.

"What's up Toms?" Wilbur asks, stepping through the shadows to Tommy's side. "What do you need?" Ever so gently, he reaches out and brushes Tommy's hair back.

"He was nice," Tommy says, leaning into Wilbur's hand. "I don't--"

Phil brushes past Techno, still holding Sapnap by the throat. Sapnap is watching them with wide eyes, staring like he's seeing something impossible. His breath is fast and desperate. His wrists are held in Techno's hand, palms facing each other so he can't use his fire.

"Kid," he rasps.

"Hush," Phil orders him casually. He kneels on Tommy's other side, and cups his cheek in one hand.

Sapnap draws a tense breath.

"You're not looking good mate," Phil murmurs.

Tommy sniffls, leaning away from Wilbur to bask in Phil's touch. He wraps a hand around Phil's wrist to press his palm tighter to his skin. "I want to go home."

"We can do that," Wilbur says, "we'll bring you home. Let's get you warmed up too huh?" He pulls off his jacket and wraps it around Tommy's shoulders. "We'll just deal with this

one," he makes a careless motion towards Sapnap, "and then we'll get you home. Take a look at that foot, huh?"

Tommy swallows, "don't--don't kill him."

Phil tilts his head, looking back at Sapnap. "You want him to live, Toms?"

Tommy nods.

Phil leans forward and presses his lips to Tommy's forehead. "Alright."

The shadows whisper disappointedly, but they are gathering more around Tommy than Sapnap now. One of them snuffles at the back of his head before it drops its muzzle over his shoulder.

Techno grunts unhappily, but he doesn't argue either.

"Kid," Sapnap says again, "I don't--you don't have to go with them."

"*I want to,*" Tommy says. "They're my family."

Sapnap looks to Phil, "you won't hurt him."

Phil tilts his head, "of course I won't."

Siren gathers Tommy close, resting his chin on Tommy's head, "he's family."

"I--Okay." Sapnap says, and he slumps in Techno's grip. "But if you hurt him, or make him do something he doesn't want to, I'll fucking hunt you down."

Techno lets him go. "Good for you. Can we go now? Tommy is still bleeding."

He scoops Tommy into his arms. Wilbur makes a complaining noise in the back of his throat, "I was gonna--"

"Too bad, shoulda been faster."

Tommy laughs softly and ducks his head under Techno's chin. Techno hums approvingly, so quiet that Tommy doubts anyone else can hear it. "You good?"

"I am now," Tommy whispers.

They take him home.

The apartment is in disarray. Its obvious that they've been more busy looking for him than cleaning up. There are blood stained cloths on the back of the couch. They look like the nice kitchen rags, but Wilbur apparently hadn't put up any fuss about them.

Techno sets him in Phil's chair, "lets take a look at you, kid."

Tommy can't help the tiny noise of complaint that leaves his lips.

Techno pauses mid-way through turning away, "what do you need?"

"I--" Tommy bites his lip and looks away. Phil and Wilbur are watching him too.

Wilbur kneels by the chair and gently takes his hand, "whatever you need Toms, it doesn't matter what it is."

"I don't--" they wait patiently for him to wrestle with himself. "They didn't know my name. None of them called me by my name I--" He wants to be *Tommy*. Not "kid" not "healer" just Tommy.

"Oh Toms. Okay. We'll just call you by your name."

"Tommy," Techno says in his steady, rumbling voice, "can we look at your foot?"

Tommy nods.

Phil kneels at his feet, pulling away the makeshift bandage Wilbur made. "Ooh," he says sympathetically, "you did a job of it ma--Tommy. Its gonna sting getting this out, I'm sorry."

Tommy leans closer to Wilbur and hides his face under his chin.

"Techno, go get the first aid kit yeah?"

Wilbur runs a hand through Tommy's hair, "it'll be alright, I'm right here," he murmurs, "dad'll be as quick as he can be. We'll get you fixed up."

Tommy nods, but he can't bring himself to speak. One of the shadows lays its head in his lap, whispering incomprehensible comfort. Tommy strokes its head, focusing on the strange not-quite-there texture of it.

Techno returns and there is a thunk-click as he sets the first aid kit down and opens it. Tommy swallows and grabs a fistful of Wilbur's shirt. He wraps his arm around Tommy's shoulders. "I'm here," he murmurs again. "I've got you."

It's the first time that's been reassuring.

"I'll be gentle," Phil says, "I promise."

"I know," Tommy murmurs.

He's felt much worse pain, this is nothing, really. But he still holds tight to Wilbur when Phil pulls out the shard.

"Looks like a bottle," Phil muses, "littering idiots."

"Does your healing work on yourself?" Techno asks.

Tommy flicks his eyes up to him, "...yeah," he admits quietly.

“You could heal it if you wanted,” Techno says, like it’s a given that Tommy could use his power solely for his own gain.

When he healed himself from the injuries Schlatt’s men gave him it had been in secret. Never doing too much at once lest he get himself in trouble for wasting his energy.

“You don’t have to,” Techno says, “but if you do, you should.”

“Maybe.”

Techno nods, accepting Tommy’s decision easily.

They’re so strange, he should be scared of them. Anyone else would have wanted to stay with the heroes who would protect him. Sapnap had been kind, he’d wanted to help. Wanted to protect Tommy. Had been ready to fight all three of them alone for him.

But he’s not scared, and he doesn’t want the heroes. He wants his family. He leans his head against Wilbur and shuts his eyes. “I’m tired.”

Phil’s hand cups his cheek, Tommy doesn’t even open his eyes, just tilts his head into it a little.

“Let’s get you to bed then Toms.”

“Come on,” Wilbur says, gently scooping him into his arms. “Bedtime for little gremlins.”

“Bastard.” Tommy opens his eyes just enough to see Wilbur taking him to Phil and Techno’s room.

“I have a bed,” Tommy mutters.

Wilbur hums and holds him long enough for Phil to pull back the covers before he deposits him gently on the bed. Wilbur presses a kiss to his forehead, looking down at him with a warm light in his eyes. “Home,” he murmurs, “safe and sound.”

Chapter End Notes

They got Their Boyyyyy <3 he is home safe and everyone knows that it is a Terrible idea to try stealing him now. Again, thank you everyone for reading!

End Notes

Reminder that *everyone* in this universe is morally gray to one degree or another. They are all going to do shit things, but please be chill in the comments. I'm not good with anger even if its not directed at me <3 ty

You can find me on tumblr at technobladesbasement

If you're inspired to create anything based on my fics, art, writing, interperative dance you have full permission to do it. Inspiring other people to do stuff is my favorite thing.

If you saw typos no you didn't <3

I love comments but I am shit at replying to them, sometimes Maddie or Zambo will reply for me because they are blessed, wonderful people who know I have so much anxiety. So much. but I love all comments regardless and I thank everyone who leaves me one, they brighten my day

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!